

pk eb
1271

A
RELATION
OF THE FEARE-
FULL ESTATE OF
Francis Spira, in the
yeare, 1548.

*The backslider in heart shall be filled with his
owne waies, Prov. 14. 14.*



LONDON,
Printed by I. L. for *Phil. Stephens*, and
Christoph. Meredish, at the golden
Lyon in *Pauls Church-yard*. 1638.

A
RELATION
OF THE FEARS
OF ALL ESTATES OF

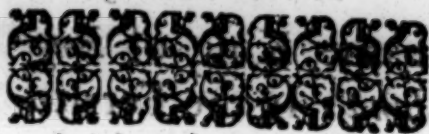
THE PEOPLE OF THE
UNITED STATES

BY JAMES M. COOPER

IN TWO VOLUMES



Printed by A. A. for T. M. Stephens and
Company, New York, at the corner
of Nassau and Church Streets



A
RELATION
of the fearefull
estate of *Francis*
SPIRA.

IN the yeare
1548. when
the glorious
Sunne of the Gospel
was but newly risen
in *Europ*; in the dayes
of the raigne of *Ed-*
ward the Sixth of that

A 3 name

A Relation of

name King of Eng-
 land: In the Territo-
 rie, and under the Ju-
 risdiction of the Ci-
 tie of *Venice*, being
 the very border of *I-
 taly*, in the towne of
Cittadella, lived one
Francis Spira, a Ci-
 vill Lawyer, an Ad-
 vocate of great ranke
 and esteeme, being
 of knowne learning,
 and eloquence; of
 great experience; of
 carriage circumspect
 and

and severe; his speech
grave and composed;
his countenance shape
and austere; every
way befitting that
authoritie whereunto
he was advanced; en-
dowed with out-
ward blessings, of
wife, and eleven chil-
dren, and wealth in
abundance: what his
worst parts were, I
have no other war-
rant, then his owne
words, which (if not

A 4 tainted

tainted overmuch,
 with the bitterneſſe
 of a desperate mind,
 & bearing the coun-
 tenance rather of paſ-
 ſion, then of ſober
 confeſſion) may ſeem
 to adde a period to
 all further commen-
 dations.

“ I was (ſaid hee)
 “ exceſſively covetous
 “ of money, and accor-
 “ dingly I applyed my
 “ ſelfe to get by inju-
 “ ſtice, corrupting ju-
 “ ſtice

“ *stice by deceit, inven-*
“ *ting tricks to delude*
“ *justice: good causes*
“ *I either defended de-*
“ *ceitfully, or sold them*
“ *them to the adversa-*
“ *rie perfidiously; ill*
“ *causes I maintained*
“ *with all my might; I*
“ *wittingly opposed the*
“ *knowne truth, and*
“ *the trust committed*
“ *unto me, I either be-*
“ *trayed or perver-*
“ *ted. Thus having*
“ *worne out fortie*

A 5 foure

foure yeares, or there
abouts, and the news
of the new, or rather
newly revived opini-
ons of *Luther* com-
ming into those
parts, represented an
object of noveltie
unto him; who be-
ing as desirous to
know as hee was fa-
mous for knowledg;
suffered not these
wandring opinions
to passe unexamined,
but searching into
the

the Scriptures, and
into all bookes of
Controversie that he
could get, both old
and new; and find-
ing more then fame
or opinion, he began
to taste their nature
so well, as hee enter-
taines, loves, and
owns them at length;
and with such zeale,
as hee became a pro-
fessor; yea a teacher
of them, first to his
wife, children, and
fami-

family ; and after to his friends , and familiar acquaintance ; and in comparison , seemed to neglect all other affaires ; intending ever to presse this maine point, that *we ^{ought} must* wholly, and only to depend on the free, and unchangeable love of God in the death of Christ, as the onely sure way to salvation : and this was the summe of all his dis-

discourse, and this continued for the space of sixe yeares, or thereabouts; even so long as this fire could keepe it selfe within private wals; but at length it brake forth, into publique meetings; so as the whole Province of *Padua* dawned by the lustre therof. The Clergie finding the trade of their parsons to decay; and their

their Purgatorie to
waxe cold, began to
bestirre themselves;
glosing their actions
first with calumni-
ous aspersions upon
the whole professi-
on, then more plain-
ly striking at *Spir*
with grievous accu-
sations: And to effect
their purpose, some
promise labour, o-
thers favour, some
advice, others main-
tenance; all joyne to

divide, either his soul
from his body, or
both from God.

Now was *John*
Casa the Popes Le-
gate resident at *Ve-*
nice, being by birth a
Florentine; and one
that wanted neither
malice against those
of this way, nor cras-
tinesse to effect his
malicious purposes:
To him these men
repaire with out-
cries against *Spira*;
that

that hee was the man
that condemned the
received rites of the
Church; deluded the
Ecclesiasticall pow-
er, and scandalized
the policie thereof;
one of no meane
ranke; being a man
of Account and au-
thoritie, and thereun-
to, learned in the
Scriptures, elegant in
speech; and in one
word, a dangerous
Lutheran; having al-
so

for many disciples,
and therefore not to
be despised.

At this began the
Legate to cast his eye
on the terrible alteration
that lately had
happened in *Germanie*;
where, by the means
of one onely *Luther*,
the Romish Religion
had suffered such a
blow, as that it could
neither bee cured by
dissimulation, nor
defended by power;
but

but the Clergie must
either mend their
manners, or lose their
dignities : on the o-
ther side, when hee
saw how propense
the common people
inhabiting in the
~~bordering~~ countries
of *Italy* were to en-
tertaine those new o-
pinions ; hee now
thought it no time to
dispute, or perswade,
but with speed re-
pairs to the *Senate*
and

and procures authoritie from them to send for *Spira*.

Spira by this time had considered with himselfe of the nature of his carriage, how evident and notorious it was, and therefore subject to be envied by such, as neither liked his person nor religion, hee perceived that his opinions were neither retyred nor speculative;

tive; but such as aimed at the overthrow of the *Romish* Faction; & at change of policie, wherein at the best, he could expect but a bloudy victorie; and that his enemies wanted neither power nor occasion to call him to account in publique when he must either Apostatize, & shamefully give his former life; yea his own

con

conscience the lie; or
endure the utmost
malice of his deadly
enemies, or forsake
his wife, children,
friends, goods, au-
thoritie, yea, his deare
Countrey; & betake
himselfe to a for-
raigne people, there
to endure a thousand
miseries, that do con-
tinually waite upon
voluntary exile. Be-
ing thus distracted,
and tossed in the rest-
lesse

lesse waves of doubt,
without guid to trust
to, or haven to flye to
for succour; on the
suddaine Gods Spirit
assisting, hee felt a
calme, and began to
discourse with him
selfe in this manner

*Why wandrest thou
thus in uncertaintie
unhappy man? cast off
way feare, put on the
shield, the shield of
faith; Where is thy
wonted courage, thy
good*

goodnesse, thy constan-
cie? remember that
Christs glory lyes at the
stake, suffer thou with-
out feare, and hee will
defend thee, he will tell
to thee what thou shalt an-
swer; hee can beate
downe all danger, bring
bo thee out of prison, raise
thee from the dead; con-
sider Peter in the dun-
geon, the Martyres in
the fire, if thou makest
a good confession; thou
mayest indeed goe to
good pri-

prison, or death, but an
eternall reward in hea-
ven remaines for thee;
What hast thou in this
world comparable to e-
ternall life, to everla-
sting happinesse? if
thou dost otherwise re-
thinke of the scandall in
(common people live by
example, thinking what so-
ever is done, is well
done) feare the losse of
peace and joy, feare fu-
rell, death, and eternall
wrath; or if thy flesh be

so strong, as to cause
thee to doubt of the is-
sue, flye thy Countrey;
get thee away, though
never so far, rather thā
denie the Lord of life.

Now was Spira in
reasonable quiet, be-
ing resolved to yeeld
to these weightie rea-
sons; yet holding it
wisdom to exa-
mine al things, he cō-
sults also with flesh
and bloud; thus the
battaile doth renew,

B

and

and the flesh begins
in this manner : Bee
well advised, fond man,
consider reasons on both
sides, and then judge :
how canst thou thus o-
verweene thine owne
sufficiencie, as thou
neither regardest the
examples of thy Pro-
genitors ; nor the judg-
ment of the whole
Church ; dost thou not
consider what miserie
this thy rashnesse will
bring thee unto ? thou
shalt

shalt lose thy substance,
gotten with so much
care and travell; thou
shalt undergoe the most
exquisite torments that
malice it selfe can de-
vise; thou shalt bee
counted an heretique of
all: and to close up all,
thou shalt die shameful-
ly. What thinkest thou
of the loathsome stink-
ing dungeon, the blou-
die axe, the burning
fagot; are they delight-
full? Be wise at length,
and

and keepe thy life and honour; thou maist live to do much good to good men, as God commands thee; thou maist bee an ornament to thy Countrie; and put case thy Countries losse would bee of small esteeme with thee; Wilt thou bring thy friends also into danger? thou hast begotten children, wilt thou now cut their throats, and inhumane-ly butcher them, which may in time bring ho-

nour to their Countrie;
glorie to God, helpe
and furtherance to his
Church : goe to the Le-
gate weake man, freely
confesse thy fault, and
helpe all these misfe-
ries. Thus did the
cares of this world,
and the deceitful-
nesse of riches, choke
the good Seede that
was formerly sown;
so as fearing, hee
faints, and yeelds un-
to the allurements of
B3 this

this present world; & being thus blinded, he goes to the Legate at *Venice*, and salutes him with this news.

“ Having for these
“ divers yeares enter-
“ tained an opinion
“ concerning some
“ Articles of faith,
“ contrary to the Or-
“ thodox, & received
“ judgement of the
“ Church; & uttered
“ many things against
“ the authority of the
“ Church of *Rome*,

“and the universall
“Bishop : I humbly
“acknowledge my
“my fault and Er-
“rour, and my folly
“in misleading o-
“thers : I therefore
“yeeld my selfe in all
“obedience to the
“Supreme Bishop,
“into the bosome of
“the Church of
“*Rome* ; never to de-
“part againe from
“the traditions and
“decrees of the holy

“ See : I am heartily
“ sorry for what is
“ past ; and I humb-
“ ly beg pardon for
“ so great an offence.

The Legate per-
ceiving *Spira* to faint,
he pursues him to the
utmost ; he causeth a
recitation of all his
Errours to be drawn
in writing , together
with the Confession
annexed to it , and
commands *Spira* to
subscribe his name
there,

there, which accordingly hee did; then the Legate commands him to return to his owne Towne; and there to declare this Confession of his, and to acknowledge the whole Doctrine of the Church of *Rome* to bee holy, and true; and to abjure the Opinions of *Luther*, and other such Teachers, as false, and hereticall:

Man knowes the beginnings of sinne, but who bounds the issues thereof? Spira having once lost footing, goes downe amaine, hee cannot stay, nor gainsay the Legate; but promiseth to accomplish his whole will and pleasure; he soon adresteth himself for his Iourney, and being onward in the way, bethinkes himselfe of large spoyle
he

he had brought away
from the Conflict
with the Legate:
what glorious testi-
mony hee had given
of his great faith, and
constancie in Christs
cause: and to bee
plaine, how impious-
ly hee had denyed
Christ, and his Gos-
pel at *Venice*; and
what hee promised
to doe further in his
owne Country; and
thus partly with
feare,

feare, and partly with
shame being con-
founded ; he thought
hee heard a voyce
speaking unto him in
this manner.

“ *Spira*, what dost
“ thou heere ? whi-
“ ther goest thou ?
“ hast thou unhappy
“ man, given thy
“ hand-writing to
“ the Legate at *Ve-*
“ *nice* ; yet see thou
“ dost not seale it in
“ thine owne Coun-
“ trey :

“treſy : doſt thou in-
“deed thinke eternal
“life ſo mean, as that
“thou preferreſt this
“preſent life before
“it ? doſt thou well
“in preferring wiſe
“and children before
“Chriſt ? is the win-
“die applauſe of the
“people, better in-
“deed then the glory
“of God ; and the
“poſſeſſion of this
“worlds good more
“deare to thee, then
“the

“the salvation of
“thine owne Soule
“is the small use of
“moment of time
“more desirable
“then eternall wrath
“is dreadful? Think
“with thy selfe what
“Christ endured for
“thy sake; is it not
“equall thou should
“dest suffer some
“what for him? Re-
“member, man, that
“that the suffering
“of this present life

“and

are not comparable
to the glory that
shall bee revea-
led; if thou suffe-
rest with him, thou
thou shalt also
raigne with him:
thou canst not an-
swer for what thou
hast already done;
neverthelesse, the
gate of mercy is
not quite shut, take
heed that thou hea-
pest not sinne upon
sinne, lest thou
re-

“repent when it w^{as} too late.
“be too late.

Now was *Spinoza*
in a wildernesse
doubt, not knowing
which way to turn
him, nor what to doe
yet being arrived in
his owne Countrey
and amongst his
friends, with shame
enough hee relate
what hee had done
and what he had for
ther promised to doe
and how the terror

of God on the one
side, and the terror
of this world on the
other side, did conti-
nually racke him;
and therefore hee de-
sired of them advise
in this so doubtfull a
case: his friends upon
humane deliberation an-
swered; that it was
 requisite hee should
take heed that he did
not in any wise be-
tray his wife and chil-
dren, and all his
friends

friends into danger, ha-
feeling that by so smale
a matter as the recei-
ting of a little Sche-
dule, which might
be done in lesse space
then halfe an houre
hee might both free
himselfe from pre-
sent danger, and pre-
serve many that de-
pended upon him
adding moreover
that he could get
Credit in relenting
from that which he
about

ha

had already in greatest part performed before the Legate at *Venice*, and that in the perfect accomplishing thereof, little or no discredit could arise, more then what by the former action already hee had sustained: on the other side, if hee did not performe his promise made to the Legate, hee could neither discharge himselfe

selfe of the shame
 which hee had alrea
 dy incurred; nor a
 voyd farre more hea
 vie and insupporta
 ble injuries, then pro
 bably he should have
 endured; if hee had
 persisted obstinate
 in his former Opin
 ions.

This was the la
 blow of the battail
 and *Spira* utterly
 vercome; goes
 the *Prator*, and
 pro

proffers to performe
his foresaid promise
made to the Legate,
who in the meane
time had taken order
to have all things rea-
dy, and had sent the
instrument of abjur-
cation signed by Spi-
ra, to the *Prætor*, by
the hands of a cer-
taine Priest. All that
night the miserable
man ware out with
restlesse cares, with-
out any minute of
rest;

rest; the next morning being come, he gets up, and being ready, he desperately enters into the publique Congregation where Masse being finished, in the presence of friends and enemies and of the whole Assembly; being by estimation neere two thousand people; yea, and Heaven it selfe, he cites that infamo-
abj

ombjuration, word for
word as it was writ-
ten : it being done, he
was fined, at thirty
pieces of gold, which
were presently paid :
five whereof were
given to the Priest
that brought the ab-
juration ; the other
twenty five were im-
ployed towards the
making of a Shryne
to put the Eucharist
in ; then was he sent
home restored to his
Dig-

Dignities, goods, an
wife, and children an
No sooner was he in
departed, but he w
thought hee heard bo
direfull voyce saying
to him; thou wicked
wretch, thou hast den
ed me, thou hast rou
nounced the covenan
of thy obedience, thou
hast broken thy vocap
hence Apostate, be rev
with thee the senten
of thy eternall damna
on: hee tremblingly

and quaking in body
and mind; fell down
in a swoone; reliefe
was at hand for the
body, but from that
time forwards, he ne-
ver found any peace
nor ease of his minde;
but continuing in un-
cessant torments, hee
professed that he was
captived under the
revenging hand of
the great God: that
hee heard continual-
ly that fearefull sen-
C tence

tence of Christ that
 just Judge: but he
 knew he was utterly
 undone: so that he
 could neither hope
 for grace, nor Christ's
 intercession with God
 the Father in his be-
 half: thus was him
 fault ever heavy on
 his heart, and ever his
 judgement before his
 eyes. Now began his
 friends some of them
 to repent too late of
 their

at their rash counsell; o-
thers not looking so
high as the Iudge-
ment of God; laid all
the blame upon his
Melancholicke con-
stitution; that over-
shadowing his judg-
ment, wrought in
him a kinde of mad-
nesse: every one cen-
sured as his fancy led
him, yet for remedy
all agreed in this, to
use both the whole-
some helpe of Phy-
cians,

cians, and the pious
advise of Divines,
and therefore thought
it meet to convey him
to *Padua*, an Univer
sitie of note, where
plenty of all manner
of meanes was to be
had : this they accom
dingly did, both with
his wife, children
and whole family
others also of his
friends accompanying
him : and being ar
rived at the house of

on

one *James Ardin*, in
Saint *Leonards* Pa-
rish, they sent for
three Physicians of
most note, who up-
on due observation
of the effects, and of
other Symptomes of
his disease, and some
private cōference one
with another, among
themselves, returned
their verdict in this
manner, viz. That
they could not dis-
cerne that his body
C 3 was

was afflicted with a
ny danger or distem-
per originally from it
felfe, by reason of the
over-ruling of any
humour, but that this
Maladie of his did a-
rise from some griefe
or paffion of his
minde, which being
over-burthened, did
fo oppresse the spi-
rits, as they wanting
free paffage, stirred
up many ill humours
whereof the body com-
mande

a man is full; and those
ascending up into the
braine, troubled the
fancie, shadowed the
seat of the judgment,
and so corrupted it:
this was the state of
his disease, and that
outward part that
was visible to the eye
of nature, this they
endeavoured to re-
forme by purgation,
either to consume, or
at least to divert the
course of those hu-
mours.

mours from the
braine; but all their
skil effected nothing,
which Spira noting
said: Alas poore men,
how farre wide are you
doe you thinke that this
disease is to be cured by
potions? beleeve me
there must bee another
manner of medicine, it
is neither plaisters, nor
drugs, that can helpe a
fainting soul cast down
with sence of sinne, and
the wrath of God; it is
only

only Christ that must
be the Physician, and
the Gospel the sole An-
tidote.

The Physicians ea-
sily beleevd him af-
ter they had under-
stood the whole truth
of the matter, and
therfore they wished
him to seeke some
spirituall comfort. By
this time the fame of
this man was spred
over all *Padua*, and
the neighbour Coun-
C 5 trey.

treys, partly for that
he was a man of E-
steeme, partly because
as the disease, so the
occasion was especi-
ally remarkable; for
this was not done in
a corner: so as daily
there came multi-
tudes of all sorts to
see him: some out of
curiositie onely to see
and discourse: some
out of a pious desire
to try all meanes that
might reduce him to
com-

comforting some, or at
least to benefit the mo-
st themselves, by such a spec-
tacle of misery, and
of the justice of God.
Amongst these, Pan-
ha Wergertius Bishop
of Iustynopolis, and
Mathew Griskaukui,
deserve especially to
be named, as the most
principall labourers
for this mans com-
fort. They finde him
now about fifty years
of age, neither affe-
cted.

eted with the dotage hi
 of old age, nor with re
 the unconstant head m
 strong passion of fo
 youth, but in the w
 strength of his expe ly
 rience and judgment, fo
 in a burning heat, cab lie
 ling excessively for to
 drinke; yet his un w
 derstanding active ga
 quicke of apprehem ch
 sion, wittie in diff fr
 course above his or fa
 dinary manner, and al
 judiciously opposited be
 his

his friends laboured
red him by all faire
meanes to receive
some nourishment;
which he obstinate-
ly gaine-saying, they
forcibly infused some
liquid sustenance in-
to his mouth, most of
which hee spit out a-
gaine; exceedingly
chafing, and in this
fretting mood of his,
said: As it is true that Rom. 8. 28.
all things worke for the
best to those that love
God;

God; so to the wicked
 ed all are contrary
 for whereas a plentiful
 of spring is the blessing
 of God; and his reward
 being a stay to the weak
 estate of their aged pa-
 rents; to see they are
 a cause of bitterness
 and vexation; they do
 strive to make meet
 out their misery; I would
 faine be at an end; I
 deserve not this dealing
 at their hands; O that I
 were gone from hence
 that

that some body would let
out this weary Soule.

His friends saluted
him, and asked him,
what hee conceived
to be the cause of his
disease; forthwith he
brake out into a la-
mentable discourse
of the passages for-
merly related, & that
with such passionate
Elocution, that hee
caused many to weep
and most to tremble.
They contrarily to
com-

comfort him, pro-
 pounded many o-
 Gods promises recor-
 ded in the Scripture
 and many examples
 of Gods mercy: *Ma-
 finne* (said he) *is greater
 ter then the mercy of
 God.* Nay, answered
 they, the mercy of
 God is above all sin-
 God would have all
 men to be saved: *the
 is true* (quoth he) *but
 would have all that be
 hath elected, to bee saved*

oved; he would not have
damned reprobates to
be saved; I am one of
that number; I know it,
for I willingly, and a-
gainst my knowledge
denied Christ; and I
feele that hee hardens,
and will not suffer mee
to hope.

After some silence,
one asked him whe-
ther hee did not be-
lieve that Doctrine
(to be true) for which
hee was accused be-
fore.

fore the Legate; he
 answered; I did be-
 leeve it when I denie
 it, but now I neither be-
 leeve that, nor the Do-
 ctrine of the Roman
 Church; I beleeve no
 thing, I have no faith,
 no trust, no hope; I am
 a Reprobate like Cain
 or Iudas, who casting
 away all hope of mercy
 fell into despaire; and
 my friends doe me
 great wrong, that they
 suffer mee not to goe
 this

the place of unbelievers as I justly deserve.

Heere they began sharply to rebuke him; requiring, and charging him that in any wise hee did not violate the mercy of God; to which he answered: The mercy of God is exceeding large and extends to all the elect; but not to mee, or any like to mee, who are sealed up to wrath: I
tell

Rom. 2.
15.

tell you I deserve it
my owne conscience condemnes me; what needeth any other Iudge for Christ came (saie they) to take away sinne, and calling for a book, they read unto him the passion of Christ, and commin to his nayling to the Crosse, Spira said *This indeed is comfortable to such as are elected, but as for me wretches, they are nothing*

without griefe and torment,
because I contemned
ed them. Thus roaring
for griefe, and tosing
himself up & downe
upon the bed as hee
foy, he intreated them
no read no more : As
Gribauidus was com-
ning to see him, Ver-
therius said to Spira,
deare Sir, heere is Do-
ctor Gribauidus, a
eloody and faithfull
friend of yours, come
in see you : He is wel-
come

come (said he) but he
 shall find mee ill: Gr^o
 bauldas replied, Sir
 this is but an illusion
 of the divell, wh^o
 doth what he can to
 vex you; but turn
 you to God with your
 whole heart, and he
 is ready to shew you
 mercy; the earth you
 know is full of his
 mercy; it is He that
 hath said, that as often
 as a sinner repents
 his sinne, hee will re-
 memb

Psal.
 119.

remember his finnes no
more. Consider this
in the example of Pe-
ter that was Christs
familiar, and an Apo-
stle; and yet denied
him thrice with an
oath, and yet God
was mercifull unto
him: consider the
yeefe that spent his
whole life in wic-
kednesse, and for all
that, did not God gra-
tiously respect him in
the last minute of his
life?

Luke 22.
61.

life? Is the Lords
hand now shortned
that it cannot save
to this *Spira* answered
red; "If *Peter* grie
"ved & repented,
"was because *Christ*
"beheld him with
"mercifull eye; and
"in that he was pa
"doned, it was no
"because hee wept
"but because *God*
"was gracious
"him: but *God* re
"spect not me, as in
"there

“therefore I am a re-
“probate : I feele no
“comfort can enter
“into my heart, there
“is place there but
“onely for torments
“and vexings of spi-
“rit : I tell you my
“case is properly
“mine own; no man
“ever was in the like
“plight, and there-
“fore my estate is
“fearefull.

Then roaring out
in the bitternesse of

er D his

his spirit, said: It is
a fearefull thing to fall
into the hands of the
living God: the vio-
lence of his passion
and action futable,
did amaze many of
the beholders; inso-
much as some of
them said with
whispering voyce
that he was possessed
hee over-hearing it
said: Doe you doubt
it? I have a whole Le-
gion of divels that take

up their dwellings with-
 in me, & possesse me as
 their owne; and justly
 too, for I have denied
 Christ. Whether did
 you that willingly or
 not (said they) That
 is nothing to the pur-
 pose (said Spira) Christ Mat. 10.
 saith, whosoever denieth 33.
 me before men, him will
 I deny before my Fa-
 ther which is in Hea-
 ven: Christ will not be
 denied, no not in word;
 and therefore it is e-
 nough

*nough, though in heart
I never denyed him.*

They observing his
distemper to arise
from the sense and
horror of the paines
of hell, asked him
whether he thought
there were worse
paines then what he
endured for the pre-
sent; he said, that he
knew *there were farre
worse paines then those
that hee then suffered
for the wicked shall rise*

to their judgement, but
they shall not stand in
Judgement: this I
tremble to thinke of:
yet doe I desire nothing
more, then that I might
come to that place,
where I may be sure to
feele the worst, and to
be freed from feare of
worse to come.

I but you are to
consider (said one)
that those opinions
for which you were
accused before the

D 3. Legate.

Legate were impi-
ous; and therefore
you are not to thinke
you denied Christ,
but rather that you
confessed him, ac-
knowledging the in-
fallible truth of the
Catholike Church.

Truly (said he) *when I*
did deny these opinions,
I did thinke them to be
true, and yet I did deny
them.

Goe to (said o-
thers) now then be-
leeve

leeve that they are
not. Now I cannot
(said he) God will not
suffer mee to beleewe
them, nor trust in his
mercy: What would
you have mee doe? I
would faine attaine to
this power, but cannot,
though I should pre-
sently be burnt for it.
But why do you (said
the other) esteeme
this so grievous a sin,
when as the learned
Legate constrained
D 4 you

you to it, which hee
surely would not
have done, if your
former opinions had
not been Erroneous:
no, good *Francis*, the
divell besets thee, let
not therfore the grie-
vousnesse of thy sin,
(if any such be) a-
maze thee. " You say
" right (*replied he*) the
" divell hath possesst
" mee, and God hath
" left me to his pow-
" er; for I finde I can
" nei-

"neither beleeeve the
 "Gospel, nor trust in
 "Gods mercy; I have
 "sinned against the
 "holy Ghost, & God
 "by his immutable
 "decree, hath bound
 "mee over to perpe-
 "tuall punishment,
 "without any hope
 "of pardon; It is
 "true that the great-
 "nesse of sinne, or
 "the multitude of
 "them; cannot bind
 "Gods mercy: all
 "D. 5. those

Rom. 9.
 11. and
 Rom. 4.

“those many sinnes
“that in the former
“part of my life I
“have committed,
“then did not so
“much trouble mee,
“for I trusted that
“God would not lay
“them to my charge,
“but now having
“sinned against the
“holy Ghost, God
“hath taken away
“from me all power
“of repentance, and
“now brings all my
“sin

"sinnes to remem- Iarn. 2.
 "brance, and thus 10.
 "guiltie of one, guiltie of all. And therefore it is no matter whether my sinnes be great or small, few or many; they are such as Christs bloud, nor Gods mercie belongs to me: God will have Rom. 9.
 "mercy on whom he 18.
 "will have mercie, and whom he will he hardneth; this is
 "it.

“it that gnawes my
“heart, he hath hard-
“ned mee; and I find
“that hee daily more
“and more doth har-
“den me; and there-
“fore I am out of
“hope: I feele it, and
“therefore cannot but
“despaire; I tell you,
“there was never
“such a monster as I
“am; never was man
“alive a spectacle of
“so exceeding misfe-
“ric: I knew that
“justi-

“justification is to
“bee expected by
“Christ; and I deni-
“ed, and abjured it;
“to the end I might
“keepe this fraile life
“from adversitie, and
“my children from
“povertie; and now
“behold, how bitter
“this life is to mee; &
“God only knowes,
“what shall become
“of this my family;
“but surely no good
“is likely to betide
“it,

“it, but rather daily “
 “worſe and worſe; “
 “and ſuch a ruine at “
 “the length, as that “
 “one ſtone ſhall not “
 “be left on another. “

But why ſhould “
 you (ſaid Gribauldus) “
 conceit ſo deeply of “
 your ſin, ſeeing you “
 cannot but know “
 that many have de “
 nyed Chriſt, yet ne “
 ver fell into deſpaire “
 “Well (ſaid he) I can “
 “ſee no ground o “
 “com

“comfort for such,
“neither can I war-
“rant them frō Gods
“revenging hand in
“wrath; though it
“pleaseth God yet to
“suffer such to be in
“peace: and besides,
“there will a time of
“change come, and
“then they shall bee
“thoroughly tryed:
“and if it were not
“so, yet God is just in
“making me an Ex-
“ample to others; &
“I

"I cannot justly cō-
 "plaine: there is no
 "punishmēt so great
 "but I have deserved
 "it, for this so hein-
 "ous offence: I as-
 "sure you it is not
 "small matter to de-
 "ny Christ; and yet
 "it is more ordinari-
 "ly then commonly
 "men doe conceive
 "of; it is not a denial
 "all made before
 "Magistrate as it is
 "with mee; for
 "after

“often as a Christian
“doth dissemble the
“knowne truth, as
“often as hee ap-
“prooves of false
“worship, by pre-
“senting himselfe at
“it, so often as hee
“hath not things
“worthy of his cal-
“ling, or such things
“as are unworthy of
“his calling: so of-
“tē he denies Christ:
“thus did I, and ther-
“fore am justly pu-
“nished for it.

Your estate (quoth yo
Grihauldus) is not so
 strange as you make
 it; *Iob* was so far
 gone, that hee com
 plained God had for
 him as a marke
 gainst him: and *Da*
vid that was a man
 after Gods owne
 heart, complained o
 ten that God had for
 faken him, and wa
 become his enemy
 yet both received o
 fort againe: comf
 yo

thy your selfe therefore,
for God will come at
length, though hee
now seeme farre off.

“O Brother (*an-
swered Spira*) I be-
leeve all this; the di-
vels beleeve and
tremble; but *David*
was ever elected &
dearely beloved of
God; and though he
fell, yet God tooke
not utterly away
his holy Spirit; and
therefore was heard
“when

“ when hee prayed
“ *Lord take not thy bo-
“ ly Spirit from mee*
“ but I am in another
“ case, being ever
“ cursed from the
“ presence of God
“ neither can I pray
“ as he did, because
“ his holy Spirit
“ quite gone, & can
“ not be recalled; and
“ therefore I know
“ shall live in con-
“ nual hardnesse
“ long as I live: O the

I might feel but the
least sense of the
love of God to me,
though but for one
small moment, as I
now feel his heavy
wrath that burnes
like the torments of
hell within me, &
afflicts my Consci-
ence with pangs
unutterable; verily
desperation is hell
it selfe.

Heere *Gribauldus*
saith, I doe verily be-
leeve,

leeve, Spira, that God
 having so severely
 chastised you in this
 life, correcteth you in
 mercy heere, that he
 may spare you here
 after, and that he had
 mercy sealed up for
 you in time to come.

Nay (said Spira) *hence* doe I know that
 I am a reprobate, because
 he afflicteth mee with
 hardnesse of heart: *Ch*
 that my body had suffe
 red all my life long, I am

that hee would be pleased to release my soule, and ease my Conscience, this burthened Conscience.

Gribauldus being desirous to ease his mind from the continual meditation of his sinne; as also to know how for the present he stood affected to the Romish Church; asked him what he thought became of the soules of men

men so soone as they
departed out of the
body, to which he
answered.

Although this be
not so fully revealed in
Scripture; yet I verily
beleeve that the souls
of the Elect goe pre-
sently to the Kingdom
of glory; and not that
they sleepe with the body
as some doe imagine.

Very well, said one
of the spectators; what
doe the Scripture say
thereof?

Francis Spira.

93

then say, that God ^{1. Sam. 2.}
brings down to hell, ^{6.}
and raiseth up; seeing
it cannot be meant of
the estate of the soule
after death, which as
thou sayest, either go-
eth to heaven with-
out change, or to hell
without redempti-
on: it must be under-
stood of the estate of
the soule in this life;
like that wherein thou
art at this present: and
oftentimes wee see
that E that

that God suffers men
to fall into the jaws
of despaire, and yet
raiseth them up again
and therefore despaire
not, but hope; it shall
bee even thus with
thee in his good
time.

This is the work
(quoth Spira) *this the pro*
labour; for I tell
when I at Venice
first abjure my profes
sion, and so, as it were
drew an Indenture,
Spira

Spirit of God often admonisht mee; and when at Cittadella, I did, as it were, set to my seale; the Spirit of God often suggested to mee, Doe not write Spira, doe not seale; yet I resisted the Holy Ghost, and did both; and at that verie present I did evidently feelee a wound inflicted in my very will, so although I can say, I would beleeeve; yet cannot I say I wil beleeeve,

God hath denied mee
the power of will; and
it befalls mee in this my
miserable estate, as with
one that is fast in iron,
and his friends com-
ming to see him, do per-
tie his estate, and do
perswade him to shake
off his fetters, and
come out of his bonds,
which God knowes he
would faine do, but cannot
not, this is my very case,
you perswade me to be-
leeve: how faine would

I doe it, but cannot?
Now I cannot. Then
violently grasping his
hands together, and
raising himselfe up:
Behold (saide he) I am
strong, yet by little and
little I decay and con-
sume, and my servants
would faine preserve
this wearie life; but at
length the will of God
must bee done, and I
shall perish miserably
as I deserve: rejoyce
ye righteous in the
Lord;

Psal. 32.

11.

Lord; blessed are you
whose hearts the Lord
hath mollified.

Then after some
pause; It is wonderful,
I earnestly desire to
pray to God with my
heart, yet I cannot; I see
my damnation, and
know my remedie is on-
lie in Christ, yet I can-
not set my selfe to laie
hold on it; such are the
punishments of the dam-
ned; they confesse what
I confesse, they repent in

of their losse of heaven,
they envie the Elect,
yet their repentance
doth them no good, for
they cannot mend their
waies.

As hee was thus
speaking, he observed
divers flies that came
about him, and some
lighted on him: Be-
hold (said hee) now al-
so * Belzebub comes
to his banquet, you shal
shortly see my end, and
in mee an example to

* Signi-
fies the
god of
flies.

manie of the justice &
judgement of God.

About this time
came in two Bishops
with divers Schol-
lers of the Vniversity
one of them being
Paulus Vergerius, ha-
ving observed *Spira*
more then any other,
beeing continually
conversant with him,
told him his estate
was such, as rather
stood in need of
Prayer then advice;
and

Francis Spira.

FOI

and therefore desired him to pray with him in the Lords Prayer; *Spira* consented, and he began.

Our Father which art in heaven,) then breaking forth into teares, hee stopped; but they sayd, it is well, your grieve is a good signe: "I be-
"waile (said he) my
"miserie, for I per-
"ceive I am forsaken
"of God, and cannot

E 5: call

“cal to him from my
“heart, as I was wont
to doe ; yet let us goe
on, said *Vergerius*.

Thy Kingdom come;)

“O Lord (said *Spira*)

“bring mee also into

“this Kingdome ; I

“beseech thee shut

“mee not out. Then

comming to those

words, *Give us this*

day our daily bread; he

added ; “O Lord, I

“have enough and a-

“bundance to feed

this

“this carkeise of
“mine; but there is a-
“nother bread, I hum-
“bly beg the bread of
“thy grace; without
“which, I know I
“am but a dead man.

*Leade us not into
temptation;)* “seeing
“Lord that I am
“brought into temp-
“tation, helpe mee
“Lord that I may e-
“scape; the enimie
“hath overcome; help
“mee, I beseech thee,
to

“to overcome this
“cruell Tyrant.

These things hee
spake with a mourn-
full voyce, the teares
trickling downe a-
bundantly; and ex-
pressing such affe-
ction and passion, as
turned the bowels of
those there present,
with grieve and com-
punction; they then
turning to *Spira*,
said: You know that
none can call *Christ*
Iesus.

Jesus the Lord, but by
the Holy Ghost: you
must therefore think
of your selfe accor-
ding to that soft affe-
ction, which you ex-
presse in your prayrs;
inferring therby that
God hath not wholly
cast you off; or be-
leaved you of his
spirit utterly.

*I perceive (said Spi-
(a) that I call on him.^{7.}*
*my eternall damna-
tion; for I tell you again;*

it

it is a new and unheard
of example that you
finde in me : If Judas
(saide they) had but
outlived his dayes,
which by nature hee
might have done ; he
might have repented,
and Christ would
have received him to
mercie ; and yet he
sinned most grievous-
ly against his Master
which did so esteeme
of him, as to honour
him with the dignitie

of an *Apostle*, and did
maintaine and feed
him: Hee answered,
"Christ did also feed
and honor me, nei-
ther yet is my fault
one jot lesse then
that of his; because
it is not more ho-
nour to bee perso-
nally present with
Christ in the flesh,
then to bee in his
presence now by il-
lumination of his
holy Spirit and be-
sides

“ sides, I deny that e-
“ ver *Iudas* could
“ have repented, how
“ long soever he had
“ lived; for grace was
“ quite taken from
“ him, as it is now
“ from mee.

O *Spira* (said they)
you know you are in
a spirituall desertion;
you must therefore
not beleeeve what Sa-
tan suggests; he was
ever a lyar from the
beginning, & a mee-
Impo-

Impostour, and will
cast a thousand lying
fancies into your
minde, to beguile
you withal; you must
rather beleewe those
whom you judge to
bee in a good estate,
and more able to dis-
cerne of you then
your selfe; beleewe us,
and wee tell you,
that God will be mer-
cifull unto you.

O bere is the knot
(said Spira.) I would I
could

could beleewe ; But
cannot.

Then hee began to
reckon up what fear-
full dreames and vi-
sions, hee was conti-
nually troubled with
al; that he saw the di-
vels come flocking
into his Chamber
and about his bed
terrifying him with
strange noyses ; that
these were not fan-
cies, but that hee saw
them as really as the
stander

standers by; and that
besides these outward
terrors, hee felt con-
tinually, a racking
torture of his minde,
and a continuall but-
cherie of his consci-
ence, being the ve-
ry proper pangs of
the damned wights
in hell.

Cast these fancies said
(*Gribauldus*) these are
but illusions; humble
your selfe in the pre-
sence of God, and
praise

praise him.

Psal. 6. 5.

“The dead praise
 “not the Lord (an-
 “swered he) nor they
 “that goe downe in-
 “to the pit: we that
 “are drowned in de-
 “spaire, are dead and
 “are already gone
 “downe into the pit:
 “what hell can there
 “be worse then de-
 “spiration; or what
 “greater punishment
 “the gnawing worm
 “unquenchable fire,
 horror,

"horrou; confusion,
"and (which is worse
"then all) desperati-
"on it selfe continu-
"ally tortures me; &
"now I count my
"present estate worse
"then if my soule (se-
"perated from my
"body) were with
"Iudas & the rest of
"the damned; and
"therefore, I now de-
"fire rather to bee
"there, then thus to
"live in the body.

One

One being present, *Spir*
 repeated certain *w*
 words out of the
Pfal. 89. *Psalmes* : If thy chil *Spi*
 dren forsake my law *be*
 and walke not in my *ed,*
 judgements, I wil *but*
 site their transgressi *and*
 ons with rods, and *be*
 their iniquities with *bo*
 stripes ; nevertheless *or*
 my loving kindnes *don*
 I will not utterly take *ph*
 from them, nor suffe *ore*
 my faithfulness *for*
 faile : Marke this, *the*
Spir

Pfal. 89.
30.

Spira, my Covenant
will not breake.

These promises (said
Spira) belong onely to
the elect, which if temp-
ted, may fall into sinne,
but are againe lifted up
and recovered out : as

The Prophet saith, Prov. 24.
16.
though hee fall, he shall Psal. 37
24.
not bee utterly cast
downe, for the Lord
upholdeth him : there-
fore Peter could rise,
for he was Elected ; but
the reprobate when they
fall

fall cannot rise againe,
as appeares in Cain,
Saul, and Iudas : God
deales one way with the
Elect, and another way
with Reprobates.

The next day he
prayed with them in
the Latine tongue
and that with excellen
lent affection, as outwa
wardly appeared. Pro
blessed bee God (saith
Vergerius) these shew
no signes of eternall
reprobation : (saye

must not O Spira,
 seeke out the secret
 counsels of Gods e-
 lection and reprobation,
 for no man can
 know so long as hee
 liues, whether by his
 good or bad deeds, he
 is worthy of Gods
 love or anger: do you
 not know that the
 Prophet David com-
 plained, that God
 had cast off his Soule.
 I know all this (quoth
 Spira) I know the mer-

Ecclef. 9.

1.

Psal. 88.

14.

F. cies

crises of Gbd are infinite,
and doe surpasse the
sins of the whole world,
and that they are effe-
ctual to all that believe,
but this faith, and the
hope, is the gift of God.
O that he would give
mee, but it is impos-
sible as to drink up the
sea at a draught: as
that of Solomon,
had ever tried that
I feele by woful experi-
ence; hee would never
have spoken as hee did.

but the truth is, he nor
had mortall man, such
an evident experience
of Gods anger and ba-
tered against him, as I
have; you that are in a
good estate, thinke re-
pentance and faith to be
works of great facilitie,
and therefore you think
it an easie matter to
perswade a man to be-
leeve; the whole neede
not the Physician; and
he that is well, can soon
give counsell to such as

are ill; but this is the
 hell to mee, my heart is
 hardened, I cannot be-
 lieve; many are called,
 but few are chosen.

Vpon what grounds
 (said they) doe you
 conceive so ill an opi-
 nion of your selfe?

" I once did know
 " God to bee my Fa-
 " ther, not onely
 " by creation; but by
 " regeneration; I
 " knew him by his
 " beloved Sonne, the
 " authour

“ authour and finish-
“ er of our Salvation;
“ I could pray to him,
“ and hope for pardon
“ of sins from him;
“ I had a taste of his
“ sweetnesse, peace,
“ and comfort: now
“ contrarily, I know
“ God not as a Father
“ but as an enemy;
“ what more? my
“ heart hates God &
“ seekes to get above
“ him: I have nothing
“ else to flie to but
F 3 terrour

“terroure and de-
 “spaire.

Belike you thinke
 then (said they) that
 those who have the
 earnest and first fruits
 of Gods Spirit, may
 notwithstanding fall
 away?

The judgements of
 God are a deepe abisse,
 (said hee) wee are soon
 drowned if we enter in-
 to them; he that thinks
 hee standeth, let him
 take heed lest hee fall:

as

Psa. 36.6

Rom. 11.

33.

1. Cor.

10. 12.

as for my selfe; I know
I am fallen backe, and
that I once did know
the truth; though it may
be not so thoroughly: I
know not what else to
say, but that I am one Psal. 50.
of that number, which ^{22.}
God hath threatned to
teare in pieces.

Say not so) answered
they) for God may
come, though at the
last houre; keep hold
therefore, at the least
by hope.

"This (quoth hee)
 "is my case, I tell you
 "I cannot, God hath
 "deprived mee of
 "hope; this brings
 "terror to my mind,
 "and pines this body
 "which now is so
 "weake, as it cannot
 "performe the sever-
 "rall offices thereof:
 "for as the Elect
 "have the Spirit re-
 "stifying that they
 "are the sons of God,
 "so the Reprobates
 even

Rom. 8.
 16.

"even while they
 "live, doe often feele
 "a worme in their
 "conscience, where-
 "by they are cōdem-
 "ned already; and
 "therefore as soone
 "as I perceived this
 "wound inflicted on
 "my minde and wil,
 "I knew that I wan-
 "ted the gifts of sa-
 "ving grace, and that
 "I was utterly un-
 "done; God chaste-
 "neth his children^{33.}

1. Cor. 11

E 5 with

Rom. i.
28.

“with temporarie
“afflictions, that
“they may come as
“gold out of the fire;
“but punisheth the
“wicked with blind-
“nes in their under-
“standings, & hard-
“nesse of heart; and
“woe be to such, from
“whom God taketh
“his holy Spirit.

Iohn 12.
42.

Here one rebuked
him and told him, he
gave too much credence
to fence, that hee was

not

not to beleeve him-
selfe, but rather him
that was in a good e-
state, and I testifie to
you (sayd hee) that
God wil be merciful
to you.

Nay (answered he)
for because I am in this
ill estate; therefore can
I beleeve nothing but
what is contrarie to my
salvation and comfort;
but you that are so con-
fident of your good e-
state, looke that it bee
true.

true, for it is no such
 small matter to bee af-
 fured of sinceritie:
 a man had need bee
 exceeding strongly
 grounded in the Truth,
 before he can be able to
 affirme such a matter
 as you now doe; it is not
 the performance of a
 few outward duties, but
 a mightie constant la-
 bour, with all intenti-
 on of heart and affecti-
 on; with full desire and
 endeavour, continually

to set forth Gods glorie; there must be neither feare of Legates, Inquitors, Prisons, nor anie death whatsoever; manie thinke themselves happie that are not; it is not every one that saith, Lord, Lord; that shall goe to Mat. 7. 23. heaven.

They came another day and found him with his eyes shut, as if hee had beene drowzie, and verie

very loath to discourse; at which time there came in also a grave man from Cittadella; who demanded of Spira, if hee knew him, or not; he lifting up his eye-lids and not suddenly remembering him, the man said to him; I am Presbiter *Antonie Fontanina*; I was with you at Venice, some 8. weeks since: "O cursed day (sayd Spira)

"*Spira*) O cursed
" day : O that I had
" never gone thither,
" would God I had
" then died.

Afterwards came
in a Priest called *Bern-*
ardinus Sardoneus :
bringing with him a
book of Exorcismes,
to conjure this devil:
whom when *Spira*
saw, shaking his head
hee said

" I am verily per-
" suaded indeed, that
God

" God hath left mee
 " to the power of the
 " divels. but such they
 " are, as are not to be
 " found in your Le-
 " tanie. neither will
 " they be cast out by
 spels: The Priest pro-
 ceeding in his inten-
 ded purpose; with a
 strange uncouth ge-
 sture, & a loud voice,
 adjured the Spirit to
 come into *Spira's*
 tongue, and to an-
 swer: *Spira* deriding
 his

Francis Spira.

133

his fruitlesse labour,
with a sigh turned
from him. A Bishop
being there present,
said to *Spira*. brother
God hath put vertue
into the Word and
Sacraments : and we
have used the one
meanes, and find not
that effect which we
desire : shall wee try
the efficacie of the
Sacraments, surely if
you take it as a true
Christian ought to
receiue

receive, the body and
 blood of Christ, is
 will proove a love
 raigne medicine for
 your sicke soule.

"This I cannot do
 (answered hee) for

"they that have no
 right to the promi

"ses have no right to

"the seales : the E

"charist was appoi

"ted onely for bele

"vers : if wee ha

"not faith, wee ca

"and drinke judgm

ment

1. Cor.
 11.29.

ment to our selves:
I received it about
a moneth since, but
I did not well in so
doing, for I took it
by constraint, and
so I tooke it to my
deeper condemna-
tion.

Here *Vengerius* be-
gan to importune
him earnestly to be-
ware, that he did not
wilfully resist grace,
and put himselfe out
of heaven: charging
him

him vehemently, by
all the love that was
betweene them : by
the love which he
bare to his children
yea, to his own soul
that hee would
himselfe seriously,
returne to that faith
& hope, which once
hee had in the death
of Christ, with many
such like words : *Spey*
ra having heard
much of the like man-
ner formerly : and *Dech*

in

being somewhat moved,
said, "You do but re-
peat *Vergerius*, what
should I hope? why
should I beleeve?
God hath taken
faith from mee:
shew me then whi-
ther I shal go: shew
me a haven wherto
I shall retire: you
tell me of Gods mer-
cy, when as God
hath cast mee off:
you tell mee of
Christs intercessiō,
in

I

"I have denied him
"you command me to
"believe, I say I can
"not: you bring me
"no comfort: your
"command is as im-
"possible for mee to
"obey, as to keep the
"Morrell Law: that
"you should pers-
"swade one to love
"God, with all his
"heart, soule and
"strength; and God
"gives him not the
"power, can he per-
form

forme your desire?
doth not the church
teach us to sing; di-
rect us, O Lord, to
love thy comman-
demēts: hypocrites
say that they love
God with all their
hearts, but they lye:
for my part, I will
not lye, but tell you
plainely; such is
my case, that
though you should
never so much im-
portune mee to
hope

“hope or beleever
“though I desire it
“yet I cannot : for
“God (as a punish
“ment of my wic
“kednesse) hath ta
“ken away from me
“all his saving gra
“ces; faith, hope, and
“all : I am not the
“man therefore that
“you take me for: be
“like you think I de
“light in this estate
“if I could conceive
“but the least sparke

of hope of a better
estate hereafter, I
would not refuse to
endure the most
heavie weight of
the wrath of that
great God; yea, for
twentie thousand
yeares, so that I
might at length at-
taine to the end of
that misery, which
I now know will
bee eternall; but I
tell you, my will
is wounded: who
G longs

“longs more to be
“leeve then I doe
“but all the ground
“worke of my hope
“is quite gone; for if
“the testimonies of
“holy Scripture bee
“true, (as they are
“most certainly true)
“is not this as true:
“whosoever denies
“mee before men,
“him (saith Christ)
“will I denie before
“my Father which is
“in heaven? is not
this

"this properly my
"case, as if it had pur-
"posely beene inten-
"ded against this ve-
"ry person of mine?
" & I pray you, what
"shall become of
"such as Christ de-
"nieth; seeing there
"is no other Name
"under heave, wher-
"by you looke to bee
"saved? what saith
"Saint Paul to the Heb. 6.
"Hebrewes? It is im-
"possible for those
"who

" who were once en-
 " lightned, and have
 " tasted of the hea-
 " venly gift, & were
 " made partakers of
 " the Holy Ghost, if
 " they fall away, to be
 " renewed to repen-
 " tance : what can be
 " more plain against
 " mee ? Is not that
 " Scripture also ; if we
 " sinne wilfully after
 " wee have received
 " the Knowledge of
 " the truth, there re-
 " maineth

and 10.

26.

"maineth no more
"sacrifice for sin; but
"a certaine looking
"for of judgement:
"the Scripture speaks
"of me, Saint *Paul*
"means me, *S. Peter* 1. Pet. 2.
"tels me, it had been ^{2^h}
"better I had not
"knowne the way
"of Righteousnesse,
"then after I have
"knowne, to turne
"from the holy com-
"mandement: if it
"had beene better I
G 3 had

“had not known, &
“yet then my con-
“demnation had bin
“most certaine: doe
“you not see evident-
“ly, that I have wil-
“fully denied the
“known truth; may
“justly expect not
“onely damnation,
“but worse, if worse
“may be imagined: Go
“God will have mee
“undergoe the just
“punishment of my
“sin, and make mee

"an example of his
"wrath for your
"sakes.

The company present, admired his discourse, so grievously accusing himselfe of his fore-past life; so gravely and wisely dilating, concerning the judgements of God, that they then were convinced, that it was not frenzie or madnesse, that had possessed him: & be-

ing as it were, in admiration of his estate, Spira proceeded againe in this manner. Take heed to yourselves, it is no light or easie matter to bee a Christian; it is not baptism, or reading of the Scriptures, or boasting of faith in Christ (though even these are good) that can prove one to be an absolute Christian: you know what I said before, the

mu

must be a conformity in
life; a Christian must
bee strong, unconque-
rable, not carrying an
obscure profession, but
resolute; expressing the
image of Christ, and
holding out against all
opposition to the last
breath: hee must give
all diligence by righte-
ousnesse, and holinesse,
to make his calling and
election sure: many
there are that snatch at
the promises in the Gos-

pel, as if they undoubtedly did belong to the, and yet they remaine sluggish, and carelesse, and being flattered by the things of this present world, they passe in their course in quietnesse & security, as if they were the onely happy men; whom nevertheless the Lord in his providence hath ordained to eternall wrath; as you may see in Saint Lukes rich man, thus it was with mee,

Luke 16

me, therefore take heed.

Then came one of his Nephews and offered him some sustenance, which he disdainfully refusing, so moved the youngmans choler, that hee charged him with hypocrisie and dissimulation, or frenzie; to whom Spira gravely answering, said:

You may interpret the matter as you will; but I
am

am sure, I am not only
the Actor; but the ar-
gument, and matter of
the Tragedy; I would it
were frenzie, either
fained or true; for if it
were fained, I could put
it off at pleasure; if it
were a reall frenzy, yet
there were some hope
left of Gods mercie,
whereas now there is
none; for I know that
God hath pronounced
me an enemy, and guilt-
ty of high Treason a-
gainst

against his Majestie; I
am a cast-away, a vas-
saile of wrath: yet dare
you call it dissembling
and frenzie; and can
mocke at the formida-
ble example of the hea-
vie wrath of God, that
should teach you feare
and terrour; but it is
naturall to the flesh, ei-
ther out of malice or ig-
norance, to speake per-
versly of the workes of
God: the naturall man
discerneth not of the
things.

things that are of God,
because they are spiri-
tually discerned.

How can this bee,
(saide Gribauldus) that
you can thus excel-
lently discourse of
the judgements of
God, and of the gra-
ces of his holy Spirit,
that you finde the
want of them, and
earnestly desire them;
and yet you thinke
you are utterly depri-
ved of them.

Take

Take this for certain
(said hee) I want the
maine grace of all, and
that which is absolutely
necessary; and God doth
many times extort most
true and strange testi-
monies of his Majesties
justice and mercy; yea
out of the mouthes of
verie reprobates, for
even Iudas, after hee
bad betrayed his Ma-
ster, was constrained to
confesse his sin, and to
justifie the innocencie
of

Mat. 27.
4.

of Christ; and therefore if I doe the like, it is no new or strange matter: God hath taken faith from me, and left me o-
ther common gifts, for my deeper condemnati-
on; by how much the more I remember what I had, and heare others discourse of what they have, by so much the more is my torment, in that I know what I want and how there is no way to be relieved.

Thus

Thus spake he, the
teares all the while
trickling down; pro-
fessing that his pangs
were such, as that the
damned wights in
hell endure not the
like miserie; that his
estate was worse, the
that of Cain or Indas;
and therefore hee de-
sired to die: yet behold
(saith hee) *the Scrip-
tures are accomplished* Rev. 9. 6.
*in me; they shall desire
to dye, and death shall
flie.*

flie from them; and verily, hee seemed exceedingly to feare, lest his life should bee drawne out to a longer thread : and finding no ease, or rest, ever and anone cried out : *O miserable wretch ; O miserable w. etch ;* then turning to the Company, hee besought them in this manner.

O Brethren, take a diligent heed to your life;

life; make more account of the gifts of Gods spirit then I have done; learne to beware my misery; thinke not you are assured Christians, because you understand something of the Gospel; take heed you grow not secure on that ground; be constant and immoveable in the maintenance of your profession: confesse even untill death if you be called thereto: he
that

Luke 9.
92.

that loveth father, mother, brothers, sisters, sons, daughters, kindred, houses, lands, more then Christ, is not worthie of him.)

These words (said they) doe not sound like the words of a wicked Reprobate.

I doe but herein imitate (said Spira) the rich Glutton in the Gospel, who though in hell; yet was carefull that his brethren should not come

come to that place of
torment : and I say to
you Brethren , take
heed of this miserable e-
state wherein I am.

Then turning him-
selfe to certain young
men that were pre-
sent, hee desired them
to conceive him a-
right : " I doe not
speak this, to dero-
gate from the cer-
taintie of saving
faith, and the pro-
mises of the Gos-
pel,

“pel, for they are
“most sure; but take
“heed of relying on
“that Fayth that
“workes not a holy
“and unblameable
“life, worthy of a be
“leever; credit me, if
“will faile, I have
“tried it; I presumed
“I had gottē the right
“faith, I preached
“to others, I had all
“places of Scripture
“in memorie, that
“might support it: I
thought

"thought my selfe
"sure, & in the mean
"time, living impi-
"ously and carelesly,
"behold, now the
"judgments of God
"have overtaken me,
"not to correction,
"but to condemnati-
"on; and now you
"would have me to
"believe, but it will
"not bee; for I feele
"too late, that good
"things belong on-
"ly to such as are
"good;

“good; whose finnes
“are covered with
“Christs death and
“bloud, as with a
“vaile, and guarded
“with his righteous
“merits from the
“flood of Gods
“wrath, even as with
“a mightie wall; lest
“miserable mortals
“should bee swal-
“lowed up with the
“greatnesse of their
“sinnes: But as for
“mee, I have as it
were,

s "were, wilfully with
h "mine hands pulled
d "down this rampire;
a "behind which I
ed "might have rested
is "in safetie, and now
he "are the swelling
ds "waters come e-
th "ven to my foule :
el "and I am cast away
als "One of his familiar
al "friendes chanced to
the say, that certainly hee
ein was overcome with
for melancholy ; which
s "being overheard, Spi-

ere H ra

166. A Relation of
re answered :

Well, be it so, seeing
you will needes have it
so; for thus also is Gods
wrath manifested a-
gainst mee, in that hee
hath taken from me the
use of mine understand-
ing and reason, so as I
can neither rightly e-
steeme and judge of my
distemper, nor hope of
remedie: you see Bre-
thren, what a dangerous
thing it is, to stop or
stay in things that con-

cern

cerne Gods glorie : &
specially to dissemble
upon anie termes : what
a fearefull thing is it to
be neare, and almost a
Christian ; never was
the like example to this
of mine : and therefore
if you bee wise, you will
seriously consider ther-
of ; Oh that God would
let loose his hand from
me ; that it were with me
now, as in times past ;
I would scorn the threats
of the most cruell Ty-

A Relation of
pains, beare torment
with invincible resolu-
tion, and glorie in the
outward profession of
Christ, till I were cho-
ked in the flame, and
my bodie consumed to
ashes.

You say you are de-
sperate, O Spira (said
they) why then doe
you not strive with
some weapon or o-
ther, violently to
make an end of your
life, as desperate men
use

use to doe ? Let mee
have a sword (sayd
Spira) why what
would you doe with
it (quoth they) I can-
not tell you (said hee)
what this minde would
move me to upon occa-
sion; nor what I would
doe.

They perceiving
small effect of all this
their labour; but ra-
ther that hee grew
worse: for the avoi-
ding of concourse of
H 3 peo-

people; for everie day
feldome fewer then
20. continued with
him, and to stop the
course of fame,
which was continu-
ally blowne abroad
of him; they consult
to carry him backe a-
gaine into his owne
countrey: and those
his friends that came
to comfort him, be-
gan to take their
leaves of him: *Ver-*
gerius among the rest,
required

required that at their
parting they might
pray together with
him: *Spira* hardly
consented, and as un-
willingly performed:
for hee said,
“My heart is estran-
ged from God, I
cannot call him Fa-
ther from my heart;
all good motions
are now quite gon,
my heart is full of
maledictiō, hatred,
and blasphemy a-
gainst

"gainst God; I finde
 "I grow more and
 "more hardned in
 "heart, and cannot
 "stoope nor help my
 "selfe; your prayers
 "for mee shall turne
 "to your owne bene-
 "fit, they can do mee
 "no good.

Vergerius came to
 take his leave of him,
 whom Spira abra-
 cing, said, "Although
 "I know that no-
 "thing can bring
 any

“any benefit to me a
“Reprobate; but that
“every thing shall
“tend to my deeper
“condemnation; yet I
“give you most heart-
“ty thanks, for your
“kinde office of love
“and good will; and
“the Lord returne it
“unto you with a
“plentifull increase
“of all good.

The next day be-
ing brought downe
to his intended Jour-

H 5 ney;

ney, by the way looking round about him with a ghastly looke, he saw a knife lying on a Table, to which hee running hastily snatched hold of; as intending to mischief himselfe; but his friends laying hold of him, stopped him in his purpose: whereupon with indignation, hee said, "I would I were a
"bove God, for I
know

“know hee wil have
“no mercy on mee.

Thus went hee
homewards, often
saying, that hee envi-
ed the condition of
Cain and *Iudas*: hee
lay about 8. weekes
in this case, in a con-
tinuall burning, nei-
ther desiring, nor re-
ceiving anything but
by force, & that with-
out digestion: so
spent that hee appea-
red a perfect *Anato-*
mie;

one; expressing to the
view, nothing but sin
newes and bones; ve
hemently raging for
drinke; ever pining
yet fearefull to live
long; dreadfull of
hell; yet coveting
death; in a continual
torment, yet his own
tormentour: & thus
consuming himselfe
with griefe and hor
rour, impatience, and
despaire; like a living
man in Hell; hee re
presented

presented an extraordinary example of the justice and power of God : and thus (as farre as appeareth) within a few dayes after his arrival at his own home, he departed this present life. Yet an occasion to make us remember, *that secret things belong unto the Lord our God* ; but charitie to man, to teach him to hope all things.

EXtraordinary ex-
amples of Divine
Iustice, God never
intended for a nine
dayes wonder : else
would hee when he
exemplifi'd *Lots* wife
have turned her into
a statue of melting
snow, not of lasting
salt ; which stood as
Iosephus tells us, till
his age, after the de-
struction of *Ierusa-*
lem:

lem : and as some Travellers report, till at this day: *ut quoddam hominibus præstaret condimentum quo sapiant unde illud caveatur exemplum; Aug. de civit. Dei. lib, 16. c. 30.* for a season against corruption, a preservative against Apostacie. This Tragedy, when fresh and new, was the conversion and confirmation of sundry Worthies :

V. er-

Vergerius a daily Spectator thereof, forsaking a rich Bishopricke of *Iustinopolis*, and tents of Antichrist; went to *Basil*, and dyed a worthy Protestant: many Nations had Eye-witnesses of their owne Students, then in the *Vniversitie of Padua* who penned the Story, the Copies whereof are frequently received: our English ones

ones were very defective, and now worn out of shoppes and hands, sundry manuscripts of this abroad imperfect, which brought mee to compare this labbur of a worthy Gentleman (who faithfully translated out of Italian, French, and Dutch Letters) with the Latine of Calius Securus, Curio, Matthews, Tribaudus, professors of

of the civil law in Pa-
dua: Sigismond Gelen
a Transilvanian, Hen-
ricus Scotus, all daily w
visitors of Spira, and m
finde it accord with
them. Touching Spi-
raes person, I finde th
(most learned wri-
ters) to incline to the
right and hopefull v
hand: moved by his
sweet, humble, and
charitable speeches
some few desperate
ones excepted, that se
from

from him in some
little agonies, which
kept him fasting and
watching about fixe
moneths space eating
nothing but what
was forced down his
dethroat. The sum of
Calvins and *Borrhaus*
their counsels (vvhoo
vvrit largely of the
use of this pattern) is
that all learne to take
heed of backsliding,
at which Gods soule
abhorres; and not to
dally

dally with Conscience, an hel on earth, if justly incensed, more to bee feared then the Spanish Inquisition, or all the Struppadoes and torments in the world; and to take heed of *Spira's* principall Errors; which were to dispute with Satan over busily in time of weakenesse: especially to reason, and conclude from present

sent sense : to Gods
past Reprobation,
and future Damna-
tion : both which is
hard, if possible for
any man to deter-
mine in his owne,
much more in others
cases : so commen-
ding thee to his grace
who is able to esta-
blish thee to the end :
I bid thee farewell,
and hope well, vvhile
the space of Grace la-
steth, *Dum spiras spe-
ra :*

14 : so mayest thou
take good and no
hurt, by the reading
of this terrible exam-
ple.

FINIS.

Decemb. 2. 1637.

Imprimatur Tho:
Wykes. R. P. Episc.
Lond. Cap. Domest.

December 1. 1877.

Impression 750:
Nos. 15. 16. 17. 18.
No. 19. 20. 21. 22.



